Sweethearts Always

Janet Madison

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Poems of Love

Fred S. Manning

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Selected by
Janet Madison

With Pictures after Pastel Drawings by
Fred. S. Manning

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AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO

W. S.

PREFACE

The Literature of Love finds its best expression in Poetry, the language of emotion. So voluminous is this literature, corresponding as it does to the universality of the emotion, that it would seem that no novelty of poetic expression were left the modern lover who would indite a sonnet to his mistress' eye-brow or turn a couplet in praise of her less obvious charms.

From the "Song of Solomon" to the "Songs of Swinburne" has welled up a chorus of songs by major and minor poets that would daunt the spirit of the bravest anthologist. No adequate anthology were indeed possible without qualifying limitations of a most definite kind.

The limitation imposed in this little collection is that of Constancy in relation to the poetry of love; the idea of

Constancy is still further qualified by limitation to the loves of men and women for one another.

Even within these narrow bounds this collection is not exhaustive; but it is believed to be the only collection of its kind, and it is hoped that it will meet with the approval of all who seek a fitting expression of the sentiments to which this collection is dedicated.

A note of variety has been introduced by placing an appropriate motto at the foot of each page, arranged in alphabetical order. These mottoes or ring posies were in olden times engraved on engagement and wedding rings.

Thanks are due various publishers for permission to use copyrighted poems.

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The First Meeting

I WISH I could remember that first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or winter for aught I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it — such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand — did one but know!

Rossetti

The First Kiss

MY fairest love, Rhodanthè, when she found
I meant indeed to kiss her lips divine,
Took the bright girdle that her waist had bound
And held it up between her mouth and mine.

And as a conduit from a fountain's brink
Draws the clear stream into another place,
So Love's sweet nectar I drew up to drink,
Kissing across the silk that hid her face.

The rosy lips I sought to meet I missed,
And touching but the maiden's zone instead,
My dear Rhodanthè from afar I kissed,
From her divided by a ribbon red:
Forced to content myself with only this —
At least the girdle carried her my kiss.

Sedgwick.

A-Friend-To-One-As-Like-To-None

Won't You?

DO you remember when you heard
My lips breathe love's first faltering word?
You do, sweet—don't you?
When, having wandered all the day,
Linked arm in arm, I dared to say:
"You 'll love me—won't you?"

And when you blushed and could not speak,
I fondly kissed your glowing cheek;
Did that affront you?
Oh! surely not; your eye exprest
No wrath—but said perhaps in jest:
"You 'll love *me*—won't you?"

I'm sure my eyes replied, "I will;"
And you believe that promise still;
You *do*, sweet—don't you?
Yes, yes, when age has made our eyes
Unfit for questions or replies,
You 'll love me—won't you?

Bayley.

A Woman's Question

DO you know you have asked for the costliest thing
Ever made by the hand above —
A woman's heart and a woman's life,
And a woman's wonderful love?

Do you know you have asked for this priceless thing
As a child might ask for a toy?
Demanding what others have died to win,
With the reckless dash of a boy.

You have written my lesson of duty out;
Manlike, you have questioned me.
Now stand at the bar of my woman's soul,
Until I shall question thee.

You require your mutton shall always be hot,
Your socks and your shirts be whole;
I require your heart shall be true as God's stars,
And pure as heaven your soul.

You require a cook for your mutton and beef;
I require a far better thing.
A seamstress you're wanting, for stockings and shirts;
I look for a man, and a king.

A king for a beautiful realm called home,
And a man that the maker, God,
Shall look upon as He did the first,
And say, "It is very good."

I am fair and young, but the rose will fade
From my soft, young cheek one day;
Will you love me then, 'mid the falling leaves,
As you did 'mid the bloom of May?

Is your heart an ocean, so strong and deep
I may launch my all on its tide?
A loving woman finds heaven or hell
On the day she is made a bride.

I require all things that are grand and true,
All things that a man should be;
If you give this all, I would stake my life
To be all you demand of me.

If you cannot do this, a laundress and cook
You can hire, with little to pay;
But a woman's heart and a woman's life
Are not to be won that way.

Mrs. Browning.

Love's Omnipresence

WERE I as base as is the lowly plain,
And you, my Love, as high as heaven above,
Yet should the thoughts of me your humble swain
Ascend to heaven, in honour of my Love.

Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
And you, my Love, as humbl and as low
As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
Whereso'er you were, with you my love should go.

Were you the earth, dear Love, and I the skies,
My love should shine on you like to the sun,
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes
Till heaven wax'd blind, and till the world were done.

Whereso'er I am, below, or else above you,
Whereso'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

Sylvester.

Darby and Joan

DARBY dear, we are old and gray,
Fifty years since our wedding day,
Shadow and sun for every one
As the years roll on;
Darby dear, when the world went wry,
Hard and sorrowful then was I —
Ah! lad, how you cheered me then,
Things will be better, sweet wife, again!
Always the same, Darby, my own,
Always the same to your old wife Joan.

Darby dear, but my heart was wild
When we buried our baby child,
Until you whispered, "Heaven knows best!"
And my heart found rest;
Darby dear, 't was your loving hand

Showed the way to the better land —
Ah! lad, as you kissed each tear,
Life grew better and Heaven more near.
Always the same ,Darby, my own,
Always the same to your old wife Joan.

Hand in hand when our life was May,
Hand in hand when our hair is gray,
Shadow and sun for every one,
As the years roll on;
Hand in hand when the long night tide
Gently covers us side by side —
Ah! lad, though we know not when,
Love will be with us forever then;
Always the same, Darby, my own,
Always the same to your old wife Joan.

Weatherby.

How Many Times

HOW many times do I love thee, dear?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,
Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity;
So many times do I love thee, dear.

How many times do I love, again?
Tell me how many beads there are
In a silver chain
Of the evening rain,
Unraveled from the tumbling main,
And threading the eye of a yellow star;
So many times do I love again.

Beddoes.

Rondel

KISSING her hair I sat against her feet,
Wove and unwove it, wound and found it sweet;
Made fast therewith her hands, drew down her eyes,
Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like dim skies;
With her own tresses bound and found her fair,
Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to me,
Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold sea;
What pain could get between my face and hers?
What new sweet thing would love not relish worse?
Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed me there,
Kissing her hair?

Swinburne.

A-Woman-Kind-All-Joy-of-Mind

Jean

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the West,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

After-Consent-Ever-Content

O blaw ye westlin' winds, blaw saft
Amang the leafy trees;
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
Hae pass'd atween us twa!
How fond to meet, how wae to part
That night she gaed awa!
The Powers aboon can only ken
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me
As my sweet lovely Jean!

Burns.

From "Evangeline"

HALF-WAY down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered,—
"Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another,
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"

Longfellow.

From "The Gardener's Daughter"

THEN, in that time and place, I spoke to her,
Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,
Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved
And in that time and place she answered me
And in the compass of three little words,
More musical than ever came in one,
The silver fragments of a broken voice,
Made me most happy, faltering, "I am thine."

Tennyson.

Love in Idleness

I ONLY see—that thou art near,
I only feel—I have thee, dear!
I only hear thy throbbing heart,
And know that we can never part.

Massey.

All-Thine-is-Mine

Immortality of Love

THEY sin who tell us love can die,
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity;
In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell;
Earthly these passions of the earth,
They perish where they have their birth;
But love is indestructible:
Its holy flame forever burneth;
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times oppressed,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest:

It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of love is there.

Oh! when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight.

Southey

May and Love

MAY in the woods and in my heart,
And we beside the river;
King love between us flying
Said, "Children, love forever."

I heard him, and I thought she heard,
Her lips began to quiver,
And so I shyly kissed her;
Love laughed along the river!

Brooke.

Woman's Heart

OH! say not woman's heart is bought
With vain and empty treasure;
Oh! say not woman's heart is caught
By every idle pleasure.
When first her gentle bosom knows
Love's flame, it wanders never;
Deep in her heart the passion glows,—
She loves, and loves for ever.

Oh! say not woman's false as fair,
That like the bee she ranges;
Still seeking flowers more sweet and rare,
As fickle fancy changes.
Ah, no! the love that first can warm
Will leave her bosom never;
No second passion e'er can charm,—
She loves, and loves for ever.

Peacock.

When First We Loved

OH, no!— not e'en when first we loved,
Wert thou as dear as now thou art;
Thy beauty then my senses moved,
But now thy virtues bind my heart.
What was but Passion's sigh before,
Has since been turn'd to Reason's vow;
And, though I then might love thee *more*,
Trust me, I love thee *better* now.

Although my heart in earlier youth
Might kindle with more wild desire,
Believe me, it has gain'd in truth
Much more than it has lost in fire.
The flame now warms my inmost core
That then but sparkled o'er my brow,
And, though I seem'd to love thee more,
Yet, oh, I love thee better now.

Moore.

The Banks of Doon

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care!
Thou 'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flowering thorn.
Thou 'minds me o' departed joys,
Departed — never to return!

Aft ha'e I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause luver stole my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

Burns.

As-True-To-Love-As-Turtle-Dove

When Other Friends are Round Thee

WHEN other friends are round thee,
And other hearts are thine,
When other bays have crown'd thee,
More fresh and green than mine,
Then think how sad and lonely
This doting heart will be,
Which, while it throbs, throbs only,
Beloved one, for thee!

Yet do not think I doubt thee,
I know thy truth remains;
I would not live without thee,
For all the world contains.
Thou art the star that guides me
Along life's changing sea;
And whate'er fate betides me,
This heart still turns to thee.

Morris.

As-True-To-Thee-As-Thou-To-Me

Sonnet from the Portuguese

MY letters! all dead paper, . . . mute and white! —
And yet they seem alive and quivering
Against my tremulous hands which loose the string
And let them drop down on my knee to-night.
This said, . . . he wished to have me in his sight
Once, as a friend: this fixed a day in spring
To come and touch my hand . . . a simple thing,
Yet I wept for it! — this, . . . the paper's light
Said, *Dear, I love thee:* and I sank and quailed
As if God's future thundered on my past:
This said, *I am thine* — and so its ink has paled
With lying at my heart that beat too fast:
And this . . . O Love, thy words have ill availed,
If, what this said, I dared repeat at last!

Mrs. Browning.

Love

THERE is no life on earth but being in love!
There are no studies, no delights, no business,
No intercourse, or trade of sense, or soul,
But what is love! I was the laziest creature,
The most unprofitable sign of nothing,
The veriest drone, and slept away my life
Beyond the dormouse, till I was in love!
And now I can outwake the nightingale,
Outwatch an usurer, and outwalk him too!
Stalk like a ghost that haunted 'bout a treasure.
And all that fancied treasure, it is love!

Jonson.

The Pain of Love

A MIGHTY pain to love it is,
And 't is a pain that pain to miss,
But of all pains, the greatest pain
It is to love, but love in vain!

Cowley.

Twin Stars Aloft

TWIN stars, aloft in ether clear,
Around each other roll alway,
Within one common atmosphere
Of their own mutual light and day.

And myriad happy eyes are bent
Upon their changeless love alway;
As strengthened by their one intent,
They pour the flood of life and day.

So we, through this world's waning night,
Shall, hand in hand, pursue our way;
Shed round us order, love, and light,
And shine unto the perfect day.

Kingsley.

The Marriage of True Minds

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love,
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Shakespeare.

Sonnet from the Portuguese

INDEED, this very love which is my boast,
And which, when rising up from breast to brow,
Doth crown me with a ruby large enow
To draw men's eyes, and prove the inner cost,—
This love even, all my worth, to the uttermost,
I should not love withal, unless that thou
Hadst set me an example, shown me how,
When first thine earnest eyes with mine were crossed,
And love called love. And thus, I cannot speak
Of love even, as a good thing of my own.
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint and weak,
And placed it by thee on a golden throne, —
And that I love, (O soul, I must be meek!)
Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

Mrs. Browning.

By Love Must Love be Mastered

BY love must love be mastered, fire by fire,
Passion by passion. When the heart grows warm,
Its flames must quench the flame of its desire,
Its new-found strength must quell its gathering storm.
Not law, not duty, not the warning voice
Of saint or angel keeps love's compass true;
Reckless of Fate love makes its fateful choice:
To love alone is love's allegiance due.
Love's power alone can make love's passion pure:
Love's voice alone can bid love's tumult cease:
Love's pain alone can make love's bliss endure:
Love's fire alone brings to love's fever peace.
O love! inflame my heart, and set it free
From every wild unhallowed dream of thee.

Holmes.

Be-Kind-to-Me-I-Will-To-Thee

The Rock of Rubies and the Quarry of Pearls

SOME ask'd me where the rubies grew,
And nothing I did say;
But with my finger pointed to
The lips of Julia.
Some ask'd how pearls did grow, and where;
Then spoke I to my girl,
To part her lips, and show'd them there
The quarrelets of Pearl.

Herrick.

Bonny Leslie

TO see her is to love her,
And love but her forever;
For Nature made her what she is,
And never made another!

Burns.

Love Turned to Hatred

I WILL not love one minute more, I swear,
No, not a minute; not a sigh or tear
Thou gett'st from me, or one kind look again,
Though thou shouldst court me to't and wouldst begin.
I will not think of thee, but as men do
Of debts and sins, and then I'll curse thee too:
For thy sake woman shall be now to me
Less welcome, than at midnight ghosts shall be:
I'll hate so perfectly, that it shall be
Treason to love that man that loves a she;
Nay, I will hate the very good, I swear,
That's in thy sex, because it doth lie there;
Their very virtue, grace, discourse and wit,
And all for thee; what, wilt thou love me yet?

Suckling.

From "In Memoriam"

I ENVY not in any moods
The captive void and noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods:

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never plighted troth
The stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'T is better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

Tennyson.

Be-True-To-Me-As-I-To-Thee

A Red, Red Rose

OH, my luve 's like a red, red rose,
That 's newly sprung in June:
Oh, my luve 's like the melodie
That 's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt in the sun,
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Burns.

To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time

GATHER ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he 's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may go marry:
For having lost but once your prime
You may for ever tarry.

Herrick.

Be-Truly-Wise-Lest-Death-Surprise

Her Answer

O'ER my darling's cheeks the lashes
Fall in trembling modesty,
Shutting out the loving flashes
From the eyes so dear to me.
And, although no word is spoken,
I am answered by this token.

O'er my darling's cheeks are stealing
All the tintings of the roses,
Love's unfailing sign, revealing
That in me her heart reposes.
As the blushes come and go
Well her answer do I know!

On my darling's lip there lingers
Just a hint of smile enchanting;
Softly clasped are dainty fingers,
Swells the bosom, faintly panting.
Never mind the whispered "yes,"
Love, your answer I can guess!

Baum.

On a Girdle

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind:
No monarch but would give his crown
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my Heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely dear:
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love
Did all within this circle move.

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair:
Give me but what this ribband bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

Waller.

Body-and-Minde-I-Thee-I-Finde

Love's Philosophy

THE fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix forever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle —
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother:
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea,
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

Shelley.

Love

TRUE Love is but a humble, low-born thing,
And hath its food served up in earthen ware;
It is a thing to walk with, hand in hand,
Through the every-dayness of this work-day world,
Baring its tender feet to every roughness,
Yet letting not one heart-beat go astray
From Beauty's law of plainness and content;
A simple, fireside thing, whose quiet smile
Can warm earth's poorest hovel to a home;
Which, when our autumn cometh, as it must,
And life in the chill wind shivers bare and leafless,
Shall still be blest with Indian-summer youth
In bleak November, and, with thankful heart,
Smile on its ample stores of garnered fruit,
As full of sunshine to our aged eyes
As when it nursed the blossoms of our spring.

Both-Or-Neither-Chuse-You-Whether

Such is true Love, which steals into the heart
With feet as silent as the lightsome dawn
That kisses smooth the rough brows of the dark,
And hath its will through blissful gentleness,—
Not like a rocket, which, with savage glare,
Whirs suddenly up, then bursts, and leaves the night
Painfully quivering on the dazed eyes;
A Love that gives and takes, that seeth faults,
Not with flaw-seeking eyes like needle points,
But, loving kindly, ever looks them down
With the o'ercoming faith of meek forgiveness;
A Love that shall be new and fresh each hour
As is the golden mystery of sunset,
Or the sweet coming of the evening star,
Alike, and yet most unlike, every day,
And seeming ever best and fairest now.

Lowell

My Wife's a Winsome Wee Thing

SHE is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The warl's wrack we share o't,
The warstle and the care o't;
Wi' her I'll blithely bear it,
And think my lot divine.

Burns.

Young Love

LIFE hath its memories lovely,
That over the heart are blown,
As over the face of the Autumn
The light of the summer flown;
Rising out of the mist so chilling,
That oft life's sky enshrouds,
Like a new moon sweetly filling
Among the twilight clouds.

And among them comes, how often,
Young love's unresting wraith,
To lift lost hope out of ruins
To the gladness of perfect faith;
Drifting out of the past as lightly
As winds of the May-time flow:
And lifting the shadows brightly,
As the daffodil lifts the snow.

Cary.

From "The Princess"

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleeps.

Tennyson.

Careful-I'le-Be-To-Comfort-Thee

From "All For Love"

ANTHONY — How I loved,
Witness, ye days and nights, and all ye hours
That danced away with down upon your feet,
As all your business were to count my passion.
One day passed by and nothing saw but love;
Another came, and still 't was only love;
The suns were wearied out with looking on,
And I untired with loving,
I saw you every day, and all the day,
And every day was still but as the first;
So eager was I still to see you more.

Dryden.

Love

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Coleridge.

Sonnet from the Portuguese

GO from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore, —
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

Mrs. Browning.

Love

NAY, do not pity me, that not a star
Hangs in the bosom of my stormy sky
Nor winglet of white feathers flutters by,
Nor like a soft dream swims or near or far
The golden atmosphere of poesy.
Down in the heart from frivolous joys aloof
Burn the pale fires, whose keen intensity
Flames through the web of life's discolored woof,
And lights the white walls of eternity.
Alas! the ravishment of Love's sweet trust
May charm my life no more to passion's glow;
Nor the light kisses of a lip of dust
Crimson my forehead with the seal of woe;
Well, were it otherwise, 'tis better so!

Cary.

Constant-You-For-I-Am-True

A Ditty

MY true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for another given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven:
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

Sidney.

Upon a Virgin Kissing a Rose

'TWAS but a single rose,
Till you on it did breathe;
But since, methinks, it shows
Not so much rose as wreath.

Herrick.

Song from "Pippa Passes"

YOU'LL love me yet! — and I can tarry
Your love's protracted growing:
June reared that bunch of flowers you carry
From seeds of April's sowing.

I plant a heartful now — some seed
At least is sure to strike
And yield — what you'll not pluck indeed,
Not love, but, may be, like!

You'll look at least on love's remains,
A grave's one violet:
Your look? — that pays a thousand pains.
What's death? — You'll love me yet!

Browning.

Contented-with-My-Choice

O, That You Were Yourself

O THAT you were yourself! but, love, you are
No longer yours than you yourself here live:
Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other give.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination; then you were
Yourself again, after yourself's decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear.
Who lets so fair a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might uphold
Against the stormy gusts of winter's day
And barren rage of death's eternal cold?
O, none but unthrifts: dear my love, you know
You had a father; let your son say so.

Shakespeare.

On His Fortune in Loving Her

I DID not choose thee, dearest. It was Love
That made the choice, not I. Mine eyes were blind
As a rude shepherd's who to some lone grove
His offerings brings, and cares not at what shrine
He bends his knee. The gifts alone were mine;
The rest was Love's. He took me by the hand,
And fired the sacrifice, and poured the wine,
And spoke the words I might not understand.
I was unwise in all but the dear chance
Which was my fortune, and the blind desire
Which led my foolish steps to love's abode,
And youth's sublime unreasoned prescience
Which raised an altar and inscribed in fire
Its dedication "to the unknown god."

Blunt.

That Thou Hast Her

THAT thou hast her, it is not all my grief,
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly;
That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief,
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.
Loving offenders, thus will I excuse ye:
Thou dost love her, because thou know'st I love her;
And for my sake even so doth she abuse me,
Suffering my friend for my sake to approve her.
If I lose thee, my loss is my love's gain,
And losing her, my friend hath found that loss;
Both and each other, and I lose both twain,
And both for my sake lay on me this cross:
But here's the joy: my friend and I are one;
Sweet flattery! then she loves but me alone.

Shakespeare.

Death-Only-Partes-Two-Loving-Hearts

Sonnet

TRUST me, I have not earned your dear rebuke.
I love, as you would have me, God the most;
Would love not you, but Him, must one be lost,
Nor with Lot's wife cast back a faithless look,
Unready to forego what I forsook.
This say I, having counted up the cost;
This, though I be the feeblest of God's host;
The sorriest sheep Christ shepherds with His crook.
Yet while I love my God the most, I deem
That I can never love you overmuch;
I love Him more, so let me love you too.
Yea, as I apprehend it, love is such
I cannot love you if I love not Him,
I cannot love Him if I love not you.

Rossetti.

Desire-and-Deserve

To Celia

DRINK to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss within the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not wither'd be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear.
Not of itself but thee!

Jonson.

Desire-Hath-No-Rest

A Kiss Within the Cup

THERE is no gladness in the glass
Unless thou pour for me;
But taste it first before it pass,
And I will drink with thee:
For if those lovely lips of thine
Have breathed upon the brim,
I swear that I will drain the wine,
Although it reach the rim.

Oh, who could bear to say thee nay,
When thou hast kissed the cup?
Or who would turn the other way,
When thou hast filled it up?
For oh, the cup has kept the kiss
And carries me a share,
To show me all the wasted bliss
Thy lips have lavished there!

Sedgwick.

Desire-Hath-Set-My-Heart-On-Fire

Good-Night

"GOOD-NIGHT?" No, love! the night is ill
Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still, —
Then it will be *good* night.

How were the night without thee good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood, —
Then it will be *good* night.

The hearts that on each other beat
From evening close to morning light
Have nights as good as they are sweet,
But never *say* "Good-night."

Shelley.

Desire-Like-Fire-Doth-Still-Aspire

O Days and Hours

O DAYS and hours, your work is this,
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace
For fuller gain of after bliss;

That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet,
And unto meeting when we meet
Delight a hundredfold accrue.

For every grain of sand that runs,
And every span of shade that steals,
And every kiss of toothèd wheels
And all the courses of the suns.

Tennyson.

Sonnet from the Portuguese

IF I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange
And be all to me? Shall I never miss
Home-talk and blessing, and the common kiss
That comes to each in turn, nor count it strange,
When I look up, to drop on a new range
Of walls and floors — another home than this?
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is
Filled by dead eyes, too tender to know change?
That 's hardest! If to conquer love, has tried,
To conquer grief tries more — as all things prove:
For grief indeed is love, and grief beside.
Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love —
Yet love me — wilt thou? Open thine heart wide,
And fold within the wet wings of thy dove.

Mrs. Browning.

Nature hath Crowned Thee

NATURE hath crowned thee with her fairest crown:
Men call thee beautiful in form and face,
Praise thy dark eyes, thy tresses golden-brown,
Thy stately height, thy figure's buoyant grace.
I see these charms, but with another sight,
As symbols of a charm still unexpressed; —
See in their loveliness thy spirit's light
Burning through clouds, — half-hidden, half-confessed.
Should I have loved thee hadst thou been less fair?
Vain question! for thy beauty is thine own —
Thine own — thy self: 'tis because thou art there,
That all thy grace to fuller grace has grown.
Thy spirit made thee beautiful, and still
It moulds thy form and features to its will.

Holmes.

Love Me a Little

LOVE me a little, love me as thou wilt,
Whether a draught it be of passionate wine
Poured with both hands divine,
Or just a cup of water spilt
On dying lips and mine.
Give me the love thou wilt,
The purity, the guilt,
So it be thine.

Love me a little. Let it be thy cheek
With its red signals that were dear to kiss,
Or, if thou mayest not this,
A finger-tip my own to seek
At nightfall when none guess.
Eyes have the wit to speak,
And sighs send messages:
Even give less.

Love me a little. Let it be in words
Of happy omen heralding thy choice,
Or in a veiled sad voice
Of warning like a frightened bird's.
How should I not rejoice
Though swords be crossed with swords
And discord mar love's chords,
And tears thy voice?

Love me a little. All my world thou art.
Thy much were Heaven: thy little Earth shall be.
If not Eternity,
Then Time be mine, the human part,
A single hour with thee
Love as thou wilt and art,
With all or half a heart,
So thou love me.

Blunt.

From "Queen Mary"

IT was Maytime,
And I was walking with the man I loved, —
I loved him, but I thought I was not loved;
And both were silent, letting the wild brook
Speak for us, till he stoop'd and gathered one
From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
Look'd hard and sweet at me and gave it me.
I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
And put it in my bosom, and all at once
I felt his arm about me, and his lips.

Tennyson.

I LOVE you. Words are small;
'Tis life speaks plain: In twenty years
Perhaps you may know all.

Craik.

How His Soul Came Ensnared

MY soul would one day go and seek
For roses, and in Julia's cheek
A richesse of those sweets she found,
As in another Rosamond.
But gathering roses as she was,
Not knowing what would come to pass,
It chanc'd a ringlet of her hair
Caught my poor soul, as in a snare:
Which ever since has been in thrall
Yet freedom, she enjoys withal.

Herrick.

Cupid Swallowed

FAITH, I thought him dead. Not he!
There he lives with tenfold glee;
And now this moment, with his wings
I feel him tickling my heart-strings.

Hunt.

The Song of Thirty Years

TIME, my pretty one, is flying,
Strange that we should meet,
Where the very road seems dying,
In its last retreat;
And the Sun in gloomy splendor,
Lurks behind the hill,
E'en a dying day is tender,
Let me — let me love you still.

Tho' your glances only fashion
Ancient memories,
There is still a depth of passion
In your liquid eyes;
If the Sun his brightness loses
Under autumn skies,
I can tell what home he chooses,
Let me — let me read your eyes.

Smooth as Parian marble now,
In a few years more,
Jealous Time will limn your brow,
With his tokens o'er,
And bleach all your locks, my girl,
Now black as jet;
Trust me with one glossy curl
To kiss and fondle yet.

Very soon a rosy, blushing
Dimpled cheek like this is,
Will lose all its joyous flushing
At my long, long kisses;
And your lips will lose, my sweetest,
Their gay golden smile,
Tho' most fragrant flowers are fleetest,
Kiss me with these lips awhile.

Nadaud.

God-Saw-Thee-Most-Fit-For-Me

The First Kiss

HOW delicious is the winning
Of a kiss at Love's beginning
When two mutual hearts are sighing
For the knot there 's no untying!

Yet remember, 'midst your wooing,
Love has bliss, but Love has ruing;
Other smiles may make you fickle,
Tears for other charms may trickle.

Love he comes, and Love he tarries,
Just as fate or fancy carries;
Longest stays when sorest chidden;
Laughs and flies, when pressed and bidden.

Bind the sea to slumber stilly,
Bind its odor to the lily,
Bind the aspen ne'er to quiver,
Then bind Love to last forever!

Love 's a fire that needs renewal
Of fresh beauty for its fuel;
Love's wing moults when caged and captured,
Only free he soars enraptured.

Can you keep the bee from ranging,
Or the ring-dove's neck from changing?
No! nor fettered Love from dying
In the knot there 's no untying.

Campbell.

Go, Lovely Rose

GO, lovely rose!
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Waller.

The Unchangeable

O NEVER say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify:
As easy might I from myself depart
As for my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love; if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time unchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good:
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose: in it thou art my all.

Shakespeare.

I may not Love Thee

"I MAY not love thee." "May not!" but I do:
This is my title to the crown of love, —
A title which each heart-beat doth renew, —
A title ancient as the stars above.
"I may not love thee." "May not!" but I must:
When Natures' mightiest forces are at play,
The ship, o'ermastered by the whirling gust,
Forgets its course and wanders far astray.
"I may not love thee." "May not!" but I will:
My soul loves thine and glories in love's name,—
Itself its arbiter of good and ill, —
Itself the well-spring of its ardent flame.
I may not love thee, my Beloved! but still
Love thee I do, I must, I ever will.

Holmes.

God's-Intent-None-Can-Prevent

A Woman's Answer

I LOVE, too, to be loved; all loving praise
Seems like a crown upon my Life, to make
It better worth the giving, and to raise
Still nearer to your own the heart you take.

I love all good and noble souls; I heard
One speak of you but lately, and for days,
Only to think of it, my soul was stirred
In tender memory of such generous praise.

I love all those who love you, all who owe
Comfort to you; and I can find regret
Even for those poorer hearts who once could know,
And once could love you, and can now forget.

Will you be jealous? Did you guess before
I loved so many things? Still you the best;
Dearest, remember that I love you more,
Oh, more a thousand times, than all the rest!

Procter.

What has Life Taught Me

WHAT has life taught me? Will the Judge
Most High,
When dawns His splendour on death's deepest
gloom,
Ask me this question, and with searching *eye*
Read in my heart my answer and my doom?
O when I stand before God's judgment seat,
Before his throne of glory and of grace,
With what confession shall I dare to meet
The sad, the stern reproaches of His face?
What did I learn? My passions to control,
To conquer self, to quench the fire of lust,
To seek Thy will, to purify my soul? —
Not these alas! but O Thou Judge Most Just!
Thou God of love! I learned thy mystic lore; —
I learned to love, once and forevermore.

Holmes.

Almond Blossoms

THE almond blossoms on this tree
As emblems of thy charms were made;
The flowers of life, my sweet, like thee;
Yet ere the summer's gone they fade.

E'en let us pluck them as we will,
In Love's soft hands they die away,
And, leaf by leaf, they perish still,
Like our short pleasures, day by day.

So let us take them in their prime,
Dispute them from the zephyr's breath,
Enjoy the fragrance while we've time
Of perfume soon to fade in death;

For beauty often, as it flies,
Is like some rosy morning flower,
Which withers in the wreath, and dies
A while before the festal hour.

Grieve-Not-His-Heart-Whose-Joy-Thou-Art

Each day must die when once ' tis born,
  Each spring-time blushing fresh and coy,
Yet each flower on the lap of morn
  But bids us hasten to enjoy.

And so, since all we love and cherish
  Must fade when most we feel its bliss,
Let, let the glowing roses perish,
  But only 'neath Love's lingering kiss.

Lamartine.

Eros

THE sense of the world is short,—
  Long and various the report,—
  To love and be beloved;
Men and gods have not outlearned it;
And, how oft soe'er they 've turned it,
  'T is not to be improved.

Emerson.

A Heart for Every One

AH, there's a heart for every one,
If every one could find it;
Then up and seek, ere youth is gone,
Whate'er the toil, ne'er mind it;
For if you chance to meet at last
With that one heart, intended
To be a blessing unsurpassed,
Till life itself is ended,
How would you prize the labour done,
How grieve if you resigned it;
For there' s a heart for every one,
If every one could find it!

Two hearts are made, the angels say,
To suit each other dearly;
But each one takes a different way,—
A way not found so clearly!

Yet though we seek, and seek for years,
The pains are worth the taking,
For what the life of home endears
Like hearts of Angel's making?
Then haste, and guard the treasure now,
When fondly you've enshrined it,
For there's a heart for every one,
If every one could find it.

Swain.

How Roses Came Red

ROSES at first were white,
Till they could not agree;
Whether my Sappho's breast
Or they more white should be
But, being vanquish'd quite,
A blush their cheeks bespread;
Since which, believe the rest,
The roses first came red.

Herrick.

O Near Ones, Dear Ones

O NEAR ones, dear ones! you, in whose right hands
Our own rests calm; whose faithful hearts all day
Wide open wait till back from distant lands
Thought, the tired traveller, wends his homeward way!
Helpmates and hearthmates, gladdeners of gone years,
Tender companions of our serious days,
Who color with your kisses, smiles, and tears,
Life's warm web woven over wonted ways,
Young children, and old neighbors, and old friends,
Old servants,— you, whose smiling circle small
Grows slowly smaller, till at last it ends
Where in one grave is room enough for all;

Oh, shut the world out from the heart you cheer!
Though small the circle of your smile may be,
The world is distant, and your smiles are near;
This makes you more than all the world to me.

Bulwer-Lytton.

From "The Princess"

AS thro' the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out, I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.
For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

Tennyson.

I-Am-Your-Lott-Refuse-Me-not

From "The Angel in the House"

THEN to my room
I went, and closed and lock'd the door,
And cast myself down on my bed;
And there, with many a blissful tear,
I vow'd to love, and pray'd to wed
The maiden who had grown so dear;
Thank'd God who had set her in my path,
And promised as I hoped to win,
I never would sully my faith
By the least selfishness or sin;
Whatever in her sight I'd seem,
I'd really be; I 'd never blend
With my delight in her a dream
'T would change her cheek to comprehend;
And, if she wished it, I'd prefer
Another's to my own success;

I-Am-Yures-Whil-Lyfe-Endures

And always seek the best for her
With unofficious tenderness.
Rising, I breathed a brighter clime,
And found myself all self above,
And, with a charity sublime,
Contemned not those who did not love;
And I could not but feel that then
I shone with something of her grace,
And went forth to my fellow-men
My commendation in my face.

Patmore.

All—All is Love

TO idealize our very dreams—
Women were given us for this,
And every power in nature seems
To teach us how to love and kiss.

Hugo.

Answer to a Child's Question

DO you ask what the birds say? The sparrow,
the dove,
The linnet, and thrush say, "I love, and I love!"
In winter they 're silent, the wind so strong;
What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm
weather,
And singing and loving, all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings and he sings, and forever sings he,
I love my Love, and my Love loves me.

Coleridge.

THITHER where he lies buried!
That single spot is the whole earth to me.

Coleridge.

I-Cannot-Show-The-Love-I-Owe

Fred Manning

Song

I NE'ER could any lustre see
In eyes that would not look on me;
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to sip.
Has the maid who seeks my heart
Cheeks of rose, untouched by art?
I will own the colour true,
When yielding blushes aid their hue.

Is her hand so soft and pure?
I must press it, to be sure;
Nor can I be certain then,
Till it, grateful, press again.
Must I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
I will do so when I see
That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Sheridan.

When Thou Art Near Me

WHEN thou art near me,
Sorrow seems to fly,
And then I think, as well I may,
That on this earth there is no one
More blest than I.

But when thou leav'st me,
Doubts and fears arise,
And darkness reigns,
Where all before was light.
The sunshine of my soul
Is in those eyes,
And when they leave me
All the world is night.

But when thou art near me,
Sorrow seems to fly,
And then I feel, as well I may,
That on this earth there dwells not
One so blest as I.

Scott.

She Walks in Beauty

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies,
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect, and her eyes,
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which Heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half-impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress
Or softly lightens o'er her face,
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear, their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,—
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

Byron.

Love Thee?

LOVE thee? — so well, so tenderly
Thou 'rt loved, adored by me,
Fame, fortune, wealth, and liberty,
Were worthless without thee.
Though brimm'd with blessings, pure and rare,
Life's cup before me lay,
Unless thy love were mingled there,
I'd spurn the draught away.
Love thee? — so well, so tenderly
Thou 'rt loved, adored by me,
Fame, fortune, wealth, and liberty,
Were worthless without thee.
Without thy smile, the monarch's lot
To me were dark and lone,
While, *with* it, even the humblest cot
Were brighter than his throne.

I-Give-It-Thee-To-Think-On-Me

Those worlds, for which the conqueror sighs,
For me would have no charms:
My only world thy gentle eyes —
My throne thy circling arms!
Oh, yes, so well, so tenderly
Thou 'rt loved, adored by me,
Whole realms of light and liberty
Were worthless without thee.
Moore.

She Laughed, She Climbed

SHE laughed—she climbed the giddy height.
I held that climber small;
I even held her rather tight,
For fear that she should fall.
A dozen girls were chirping round,
Like five and twenty linnets,—
I must have held her, I 'll be bound,
Some five and twenty minutes.
Locker.

I-Have-Obtained-Whom-God-Ordained

Love's Threads of Gold

IN the night she told a story,
In the night and all night through,
While the moon was in her glory,
And the branches dropped with dew.

'Twas my life she told, and round it
Rose the years as from a deep;
In the world's great heart she found it,
Cradled like a child asleep.

In the night I saw her weaving
By the misty moonbeam cold,
All the weft her shuttle cleaving
With a sacred thread of gold.

Ah! she wept me tears of sorrow
Lulling tears so mystic sweet;
Then she wove my last to-morrow,
And her web lay at my feet.

Of my life she made the story:
I must weep — so soon 'twas told!
But your name did lend it glory,
And your love its thread of gold!
Ingelow.

Rubies

OFTEN I have heard it said
That her lips are ruby-red.
Little heed I what they say,
I have seen as red as they.
Ere she smiled on other men,
Real rubies were they then.
When she kist me once in play,
Rubies were less bright than they,
And less bright were those which shone
In the palace of the Sun.
Will they be as bright again?
Not if kist by other men.
Landor.

I-Joy-To-Find-A-Constant-Mind

The Lovers' Litany

EYES of gray — a sodden quay,
Driving rain and falling tears,
As the steamer wears to sea
In a parting storm of cheers.
Sing, for Faith and Hope are high —
None so true as you and I —
Sing the Lovers' Litany:—
"Love like ours can never die!"

Eyes of black — a throbbing keel,
Milky foam to left and right;
Whispered converse near the wheel
In the brilliant tropic night.
Cross that rules the Southern Sky!
Stars that sweep and wheel and fly
Hear the Lovers' Litany:—
"Love like ours can never die!"

I-Like-I-Love-As-Turtle-Dove

Eyes of brown — a dusty plain
  Split and parched with heat of June,
Flying hoof and tightened rein,
  Hearts that beat the old, old tune.
    Side by side the horses fly,
    Frame we now the old reply
    Of the Lovers' Litany:—
    "Love like ours can never die!"

Eyes of blue — the Simla Hills
  Silvered with the moonlight hoar;
Pleading of the waltz that thrills,
  Dies and echoes round Benmore.
    "Mabel," "Officers," "Good-by,"
    Glamour, wine, and witchery —
    On my soul's sincerity,
    "Love like ours can never die!"

I-Like-My-Choice-And-Do-Rejoyce

Maidens, of your charity,
Pity my most luckless state.
Four times Cupid's debtor I —
Bankrupt in quadruplicate.
Yet, despite this evil case,
And a maiden showed me grace,
Four-and-forty times would I
Sing the Lovers' Litany:—
"Love like ours can never die!"

Kipling.

Rose

ROSE kissed me to-day,
Will she kiss me to-morrow?
Let it be as it may,
Rose kissed me to-day.
But the pleasure gives way
To a savor of sorrow.
Rose kissed me to-day—
Will she kiss me to-morrow?

Dobson.

Too Late

EACH on his own strict line we move
And some find death ere they find love;
So far apart their lives are thrown
From the twin soul that halves their own.
And sometimes, by still harder fate,
The lovers meet, but meet too late.
—Thy heart is mine!—true, true! ah, true!
—Then, love, thy hand!—ah, no! Adieu!

Arnold.

To ———

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,
Thou needest not fear mine;
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burden thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,
Thou needest not fear mine;
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

Shelley.

I-Live-If-Aye-If-No-I-Die

A Woman's Shortcomings

SHE has laughed as softly as if she sighed!
She has counted six and over.
Of a purse well filled, and a heart well tried—
Oh, each a worthy lover!
They "give her time"; for her soul must slip
Where the world has set the grooving;
She will lie to none with her fair red lip,—
But love seeks truer loving.

She trembles her fan in a sweetness dumb,
As her thoughts were beyond recalling;
With a glance for one and a glance for some,
From her eyelids rising and falling,
—Speaks common words with a blushful air;
—Hears bold words, unreproving!
But her silence says,—what she never will swear,
And love seeks better loving.

I-Seek-To-Be-Not-Thine-But-Thee

Go, lady! lean to the night-guitar,
  And drop a smile to the bringer;
Then smile as sweetly, when he is far,
  At the voice of an indoor singer;
Bask tenderly beneath tender eyes;
  Glance lightly, on their removing,
And join new vows to old perjuries,—
  But dare not call it loving!

Unless you can think, when the song is done,
  No other is soft in the rhythm;
Unless you can feel, when left by One,
  That all men else go with him;
Unless you can know when unpraised by his
      breath
  That your beauty itself wants proving;
Unless you can swear —"For life, for death!"
  Oh, fear to call it loving!

I-Shall-In-Thee-Most-Happy-Be

Unless you can muse in a crowd all day,
On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love, as the angels may,
With the breadth of heaven betwixt you;
Unless you can dream that his faith is fast,
Though behooving and unbehooving;
Unless you can *die* when the dream is past,—
Oh, never call it loving.

Mrs. Browning.

Recollections

WHEN age chills the blood, when our pleasures
are past—
For years fleet away with the wings of the
dove—
The dearest remembrance will still be the last,
Our sweetest memorial the first kiss of love.

Byron.

Passages from "Don Juan"

MAN'S love is of man's life a thing apart,
'T is woman's whole existence; man may range
The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart,
Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange,
Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
And few there are whom these cannot estrange;
Men have all these resources, we but one.
To love again, and be again undone.

Byron.

Heart's-Ease

THERE is a flower I wish to wear,
But not until first worn by you . .
Heart's-ease . . of all earth's flowers most rare
Bring it; and bring enough for two.

Landor.

I-Will-Remain-Always-The-Same

Sonnet

OH, Beauty, passing beauty! sweetest Sweet!
How canst thou let me waste my youth in sighs?
I only ask to sit beside thy feet.
Thou knowest I dare not look into thine eyes,
Might I but kiss thy hand! I dare not fold
My arms about thee—scarcely dare to speak.
And nothing seems to me so wild and bold,
As with one kiss to touch thy blessed cheek.
Methinks if I should kiss thee, no control
Within the thrilling brain could keep afloat
The subtle spirit. Even while I spoke,
The bare word *kiss* hath made my inner soul
To tremble like a lutestring, ere the note
Hath melted in the silence that it broke.

Tennyson.

Silent Thought

WHEN to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste.
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end,

Shakespeare.

From "The Song of Hiawatha"

THUS continued Hiawatha,
And then added, speaking slowly,
"That this peace may last forever,
And our hands be clasped more closely,
And our hearts be more united,
Give me as my wife this maiden,
Minnehaha, Laughing Water,
Loveliest of Dacotah women!"
And the ancient Arrow-maker
Paused a moment ere he answered,
Smoked a little while in silence,
Looked at Hiawatha proudly,
Fondly looked at Laughing Water,
And made answer very gravely:
"Yes, if Minnehaha wishes;
Let your heart speak, Minnehaha!"
And the lovely Laughing Water
Seemed more lovely, as she stood
there,

Neither willing nor reluctant,
As she went to Hiawatha,
Softly took the seat beside him,
While she said, and blushed to say it,
"I will follow you, my husband!"
This was Hiawatha's wooing!
Thus it was he won the daughter
Of the ancient Arrow-maker,
In the land of the Dacotahs!
From the wigwam he departed,
Leading with him Laughing Water;
Hand in hand they went together,
Through the woodland and the meadow,
Left the old man standing lonely
At the doorway of his wigwam,
Heard the Falls of Minnehaha
Calling to them from the distance,
Crying to them from afar off,
"Fare thee well, O Minnehaha!"

Longfellow.

If-You-Deny-I-Wish-To-Die

A Chain

THE bond that links our souls together,
Will it last through stormy weather?
Will it moulder and decay
As the long hours pass away?
Will it stretch if Fate divide us,
When dark and weary hours have tried us?
Oh, if it look too poor and slight,
Let us break the links to-night!

It was not forged by mortal hands,
Or clasped with golden bars and bands;
Save thine and mine, no other eyes
The slender link can recognize:
In the bright light it seems to fade,
And it is hidden in the shade;
While Heaven nor Earth have never heard
Or solemn vow or plighted word.

If-You-Deny-Then-Sure-I-Dye

Yet what no mortal hand could make,
No mortal power can ever break:
What words or vows could never do,
No words or vows can make untrue;
And, if to other hearts unknown,
The dearer and the more our own,
Because too sacred and divine
For other eyes, save thine and mine.

And see! though slender, it is made
Of Love and Trust, and can they fade?
While, if too slight it seem, to bear
The breathings of the summer air,
We know that it could bear the weight
Of a most heavy heart of late,
And as each day and hour flew
The stronger for its burthen grew.

And, too, we know and feel again
It has been sanctified by pain;
For what God deigns to try with sorrow
He means not to decay to-morrow;
But through that fiery trial last,
When earthly ties and bonds are past;
What slighter things dare not endure
Will make our Love more safe and pure.

Love shall be purified by Pain,
And Pain be soothed by Love again:
So let us now take heart and go
Cheerfully on through joy and woe:
No change the summer sun can bring,
Or the inconstant skies of spring,
Or the bleak winter's stormy weather,
For we shall meet them, Love, together.

Procter.

In-God-And-Thee-All-Comfort-Bee

From "Hero and Leander"

IT lies not in our power to love or hate,
For will in us is overruled by fate.
When two are stripped, long ere the race begin,
We wish that one should lose, the other win
And one especially do we affect
Of two gold ingots, like in each respect.
The reason no man knows: let it suffice
What we behold is censured by our eyes;
Where doth deliberate, the love is slight:
Whoever loved, who loved not at first sight !

Marlowe.

The One You Loved the Best

OH, love, love well, but only once! for never
shall the dream
Of youthful hope return again on life's dark
rolling stream.

Norton.

Maid of Athens

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
My dearest life, I love thee.

By those tresses unconfined,
Wooed by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
My dearest life, I love thee.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
My dearest life, I love thee.

In-Love's-Delight-Spend-Day-And-Night

Maid of Athens! I am gone;
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul;
Can I cease to love thee? No!
My dearest life, I love thee.

Byron.

Light

THE night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one,
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one,
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Bourdillon.

From "Maud"

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden,
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

Where was Maud? In our wood;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

Birds in our wood sang,
Ringing thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.

I to cry out on pride
  Who have won her favour!
O Maud were sure of Heaven
  If lowliness could save her.
Tennyson.

Lovers

TWO young fair lovers,
  Where the warm June wind,
Fresh from the sunny fields,
Plays fondly round them,
Stand, tranced in joy,

With sweet, join'd voices,
And with eyes brimming;
"Ah," they cry, "Destiny,
Prolong the present!
Time, stand still here!"
Arnold.

Sweethearts

"OH! take this flow'r, dear love," said he,
He spake with a tearful sigh.
That night he was going across the sea,
And this was his last good-by.

She took the gift with a mocking smile,
In the flush of her maiden pride,
With heartless guile she dallied a while,
Then threw the flower aside.

"Give me a flow'r, dear love," said he,
She threw the flow'r he craved,
"Now by the love I have for thee
My breaking heart is saved."

He kissed it once with a tender sigh,
And treasured it near his heart,—
"Tho' years roll by this flower and I
Shall never, never part."

In-Thy-Sight-Is-My-Delight

They met again in the after years,
In life's sad sorrowful time;
Their heads were heavy with age and tears,
And white with the winter rime.

He found the flow'r she scorned in play
At her faithful heart did dwell;
His flow'r, they say, he had cast away
Before its petals fell.

Oh, love for a year,— a week — a day —
But alas for the love that loves alway,—
Oh, love for a year,— a week — a day —
But alas! alas for the love that loves alway.
Gilbert.

Song

WHAT need of words when lovers meet?
What need of sighs and glances sweet,
As long as faithful hearts can beat?
Swain.

Lilac and Gold and Green

SONG

LILAC and gold and green!
Those are the colours I love the best,
Spring's own raiment untouched and clean,
When the world is awake and yet hardly dressed,
And the stranger sun, her bridegroom shy,
Looks at her bosom and wonders why
She is so beautiful, he so blest.

Lilac and green and gold!
Those were the colours you wore to-day.
Robed you were in them fold on fold,
Clothed in the light of your love's delay.
And I held you thus in my arms, once only,
And wondered still, as you left me lonely,
How the world's beauty was changed to grey.

Lilac and gold and green!
I would die for the truth of those colours true:
Lilac for loyalty, gold for my queen,
And green the faith of my love for you.
Here is a posy of all the three:
My heart is with it, so think of me,
And our weeping skies shall once more be blue.

Blunt.

A Conceit

YOU touched my heart; it gave a thrill
Just like a rose
That opens at a lady's will;
Its bloom is always yours, until
You bid it close.

Collins

From "Maud"

QUEEN rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

Joy-In-None-But-You-Alone

Fred S. Manning

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthly bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

Tennyson.

A Warning

TRUST no prayer nor promise;
Words are grains of sand:
To keep your heart unbroken,
Hold it in your hand.

Procter.

Joye-Day-And-Night-Bee-Our-Delight

Lovers

A CRASH of boughs! — one through them breaking!
Mercy is startled, and fain would fly,
But e'en as she turns, her steps o'ertaking,
He pleads with her, "Mercy, it is but I!

"Mercy!" he touches her hand unbidden,—
"The air is balmy, I pray you stay,—
Mercy?" Her downcast eyes are hidden.
And never a word she has to say,

Till closer drawn, her prison'd fingers
He takes to his lips with a yearning strong,
And she murmurs low, that late she lingers,
Her mother will want her and think her long.

"Good mother is she! then honor duly
The lightest wish in her heart that stirs;
But there is a bond yet dearer truly,
And there is a love that passeth hers.

"Mercy, Mercy!" Her heart attendeth,—
Love's birthday blush on her brow lies sweet;
She turns her face when his own he bendeth,
And the lips of the youth and the maiden meet.

Ingelow.

Myrrha

I'M thinking, my sweet Myrrha,
Of that happy time in youth;
When all the world appeared like thee,
In innocence and truth.

Cary.

Bonnie Peg

AS I came in by our gate end,
As day was waxin' weary,
O wha came tripping down the street,
But bonnie Peg, my dearie!

Her air sae sweet, and shape complete,
Wi' nae proportion wanting,
The Queen of Love did never move
Wi' motion mair enchanting.

Wi' linkèd hands we took the sands
Adown yon winding river;
And, oh! that hour and broomy bower,
Can I forget it ever?

Burns.

A Love Lesson

A SWEET "No, no," with a sweet smile beneath,
Becomes an honest girl; I'd have you learn it:—
As for plain "Yes," it may be said i' faith
Too plainly and too oft:— pray well discern it—
Not that I'd have my pleasure incomplete
Or lose the kiss for which my lips beset you;
But that in suffering me to take it, sweet,
I'd have you say, "No, no, I will not let you."

Hunt.

From "Omar Khayyam"

A BOOK of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

Fitzgerald.

Let-Lykinge-Laste

Defiance

CATCH her and hold her if you can —
See, she defies you with her fan,
Shuts, opens, and then holds it spread
In threat'ning guise above your head.
Ah! why did you not start before
She reacht the porch and closed the door?
Simpleton! will you never learn
That girls and time will not return;
Of each you should have made the most,
Once gone, they are forever lost.
In vain your knuckles knock your brow,
In vain will you remember how
Like a slim brook the gamesome maid
Sparkled, and ran into the shade.

Landor.

The Wanderer

LOVE comes back to his vacant dwelling —
The old, old Love we knew of yore!
We see him stand by the open door,
With his great eyes sad and his bosom swelling.

He makes as though in our arms repelling,
He fain would lie as he lay before; —
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling —
The old, old Love we knew of yore!

Ah, who shall help us from overtelling
That sweet forgotten, forbidden lore!
E'en as we doubt in our hearts once more,
With a rush of tears to our eyelids welling,
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling.

Dobson.

Song from "A Blot on the 'Scutcheon"

THERE'S a woman like a dewdrop, she's so
purer than the purest;
And her noble heart's the noblest, yes, and her
sure faith's the surest.
And her eyes are dark and humid, like the depth
on depth of lustre
Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sunnier than
the wild-grape cluster,
Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her neck's
rose-misted marble:

Then her voice's music . . . call it the well's
bubbling, the bird's warble!
And this woman says, "My days were sunless
and my nights were moonless,
Parched the pleasant April herbage, and the lark's
heart's outbreak tuneless,

Let-Mee-In-Thee-Most-Happy-Bee

If you loved me not!" And I who — (ah, for
words of flame!) adore her!
Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate palpably
before her —
I may enter at her portal soon, as now her lattice
takes me,
And by noontide as by midnight make her mine,
as hers she makes me!

Browning.

Love Me Little, Love Me Long

YOU say, to me-wards your affection's strong;
Pray love me little, so you love me long.
Slowly goes far: the mean is best: desire,
Grown violent, does either die or tire.

Herrick.

Because

IT is not because your heart is mine, mine only,
Mine alone;
It is not because you chose me, weak and lonely,
For your own;
Not because the earth is fairer, and the skies
Spread above you
Are more radiant for the shining of your eyes,
That I love you!

It is not because the world's perplexèd meaning
Grows more clear;
And the Parapets of Heaven, with angels leaning,
Seem more near;
And Nature sings of praise with all her voices
Since yours spoke,
Since within my silent heart, that now rejoices,
Love awoke!

Nay, not even because your hand holds heart and
life;
At your will
Soothing, hushing all its discord, making strife
Calm and still;
Teaching Trust to fold her wings, nor ever roam
From her nest;
Teaching Love that her securest, safest home
Must be Rest.

But because this human Love, though true and sweet,
Yours and mine,—
Has been sent by Love more tender, more complete,
More divine,
That it leads our hearts to rest at last in Heaven,
Far above you;
Do I take you as a gift that God has given—
And I love you!

Procter.

Let-Our-Contest-Bee-Who-Loves-Best

The Love-Letter

DEAR Elpis, all my thoughts and all my wishes
are for thee —
Well be it with my sweetest girl, if so indeed it be
That aught may e'er be well with her, when she
is far from me.
Alone, and all unmated, by thy shining eyes, I
swear
This solitary life of mine no longer I can bear:
There is no rest or peace for me without thee,
anywhere.
I cannot see the palaces or towers for my tears;
The landscape, too, is blotted with a mist that
never clears;
All dim and pale the temple of great Artemis
appears.
To-morrow I am going home; ah, gods, what
happiness!

And when against my heart again, thee, dear one, I shall press,
A thousand times I'll kiss thee, and a thousand times caress.

Sedgwick.

To Dianeme

SWEET, be not proud of those two eyes
Which star-like sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud, that you can see
All hearts your captives; yours yet free:
Be you not proud of that rich hair
Which wantons with the lovesick air;
When as that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone
When all your world of beauty's gone.

Herrick.

To One Who Loved Him

I CANNOT love you, love, as you love me,
In singleness of soul, and faith untried.
I have no faith in any destiny,
In any heaven, even at your side.
Our hearts are all too weak, the world too wide,
You but a woman. If I dare to give
Some thought, some tenderness, a little pride,
A little love, 'tis yours, love, to receive.
And do not grieve, though now the gift appear
A drop to your love's ocean. Time shall see.
Oh, I could prophesy; that day is sure,
Though not perhaps this week, nor month, nor year
When your great love shall clean forgotten be,
And my poor tenderness shall yet endure.
'Tis not the trees that make the tallest show,
Which stand out stoutest when the tempests blow.

Blunt.

Let-Us-Share-In-Joy-And-Care

To Emelia Viviani

MADONNA, wherefore hast thou sent to me
Sweet basil and mignonette?
Embleming love and health, which never yet
In the same wreath might be.
Alas, and they are wet!
Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?
For never rain or dew
Such fragrance drew
From plant or flower — the very doubt endears
My sadness ever new,
The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed for thee.

Shelley.

Faithless Sally Brown

BUT when he called on Sally Brown,
To see how she got on,
He found she 'd got another Ben,
Whose christian name was John

Hood.

Benedicite

GOD'S love and peace be with thee, where
Soe'er this soft autumnal air
Lifts the dark tresses of thy hair!

Whether through city casements comes
Its kiss to thee, in crowded rooms,
Or out among the woodland blooms,

It freshens o'er thy thoughtful face,
Imparting, in its glad embrace,
Beauty to beauty, grace to grace!

Fair Nature's book together read,
The old wood-paths that knew our tread,
The maple shadows overhead,

The hills we climbed, the river seen
By gleams along its deep ravine,—
All keep thy memory fresh and green.

Where'er I look, where'er I stray,
Thy thought goes with me on my way,
And hence the prayer I breathe to-day;

O'er lapse of time and change of scene,
The weary waste which lies between
Thyself and me, my heart I lean.

Thou lack'st not friendship's spell-word, nor
The half-unconscious power to draw
All hearts to thine by love's sweet law.

With these good gifts of God is cast
Thy lot, and many a charm thou hast
To hold the blessed angels fast.

If, then, a fervent wish for thee
The gracious heavens will heed from me,
What should, dear heart, its burden be?

The sighing of a shaken reed,—
What can I more than meekly plead
The greatness of our common need?

God's love,—unchanging, pure, and true,—
The paraclete white shining through
His peace,—the fall of Hermon's dew!

With such a prayer on this sweet day,
As thou mayest hear and I may say,
I greet thee, dearest, far away!

Whittier.

Song

WHEN, dearest, I but think of thee,
Methinks all things that lovely be
Are present and my soul delighted.

Suckling.

The True Lover

HE who looks and falls in love,
If a beauteous face he see,
Doth himself no lover prove
By his longing; but if he
Should a plainer maid admire
His is love, and his is fire.

All who have discerning eyes
In a lovely lass delight;
But who, when the arrow flies,
Pining for a girl less bright,
Knows the burning heart's desire,
His is love, and his is fire.

Sedgwick.

AM I not the nobler through thy love?
Or three times less unworthy?

Tennyson.

Night Thoughts

'TIS sweeter than all else below,
The daylight and its duties done,
To fold the arms for rest, and so
Relinquish all regards but one;
To see her features in the dark;
To lie and meditate once more,
Some grace he did not fully mark,
Some tone he had not heard before,
Then from beneath his head to take
Her notes, her picture, and her glove,
Put there for joy when he shall wake,
And press them to the heart of love;
And then to whisper "Wife," and pray
To live so long as not to miss
That unimaginable day
Which farther seems the nearer 'tis;

And still from joy's unfathomed well
To drink, in sleep, while, on her brow
Of innocence ineffable,
The laughing bridal roses blow.

Patmore.

From "Lucile"

O BEING of beauty and bliss! seen and known
In the deeps of my soul, and possessed there alone!
My days know thee not; and my lips name thee never.
Thy place in my poor life is vacant forever.
We have met; we have parted. No more is recorded
In my annals on earth.

Meredith.

From "The Courtship of Miles Standish"

THUS for a while he stood, and mused by the shore of the ocean,
Thinking of many things, and most of all of Priscilla;
And as if thought had the power to draw to itself, like the loadstone,
Whatsoever it touches, by subtile laws of its nature,
Lo! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was standing beside him.
"Are you so much offended, you will not speak to me?" said she.
"Am I so much to blame, that yesterday, when you were pleading
Warmly the cause of another, my heart, impulsive and wayward,

Pleaded your own, and spake out, forgetful perhaps of decorum?
Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so frankly, for saying
What I ought not to have said, yet now I can never unsay it;
For there are moments in life, when the heart is so full of emotion,
That if by chance it be shaken, or into its depths like a pebble
Drops some careless word, it overflows, and its secret,
Spilt on the ground like water, can never be gathered together.
Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you speak of Miles Standish,

Praising his virtues, transforming his very defects
into virtues,
Praising his courage and strength, and even his
fighting in Flanders,
As if by fighting alone you could win the heart
of a woman,
Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in exalt-
ing your hero.
Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible im-
pulse.
You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of the
friendship between us,
Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily
broken!"

Longfellow.

Presence and Absence

WHEN what is lov'd is present, love doth
spring;
But being absent, love lies languish-
ing.

Herrick.

No, Time, Thou Shalt Not Boast

NO, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change:
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but dressings of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old:
And rather make them born to our desire
Than think that we before have heard them told.
Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past,
For thy records and what we see doth lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste.
This I do vow, and this shall ever be,
I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

Shakespeare.

Love-Me-True-As-I-Do-You

To Elvira

WHEN thinking, dreaming, we two are alone,
And your soft hands are trembling in my own,
To loving bliss I leave my yearning soul,
And let the happy hours unheeded roll:
When in the forest glades, by whispering streams,
Your soft sighs breathe their music in my ear;
When I repeat the vows I murmur'd, dear,
In the wild, broken words of last nights' dreams;
When on my trembling knees your forehead lies,
And makes me happy with its sweet repose;
And when your looks are fasten'd on my eyes,
Just as a bee upon a summer rose,
How often then, in my poor throbbing heart,
I feel some vague, some shadowy terror start;

You see me tremble, and I pale — I lie
As dead, tho' on the breast of happiness,
And foolish tears flow down, I know not why, —
With clasping arms, and many a soft caress,
You look me thro' with loving fears,
Till your bright pearl-drops mingle with my tears —
"Oh tell me, darling, of your hidden grief,"
You whisper, "Let me lull and soothe and calm,
Till my sad heart gives your sick heart relief,
With kisses long as death and words as soft as
balm!"
Ask me no more; sweet, when your soft arms twine,
And lingering lips, and liquid eyes confess
That every feeling of your heart is mine,
I feel as stunn'd with too great happiness:

But in the bosom of each happy day,
An unknown voice is whispering unknown fears,
That happiness and love will fly away
Upon the swift wings of the passing years.
And love's own torch be quench'd with love's own
bitter tears! —
That this sweet life, where all things seem
To be in one long pleasure blended,
Is but an idle waking dream
Of happiness that should be ended!

Lamartine.

Love, What It Is

LOVE is a circle that doth restless move
In the same sweet eternity of love.

Herrick.

Song

LOVE is not a feeling to pass away,
Like the balmy breath of a summer-day;
It is not — it cannot be — laid aside;
It is not a thing to forget or hide.
It clings to the heart, ah, woe is me!
As the ivy clings to the old oak-tree.

Love is not a passion of earthly mould,
As a thirst for honor, or fame, or gold;
For when all these wishes have died away,
The deep strong love of a brighter day,
Though nourished in secret, consumes the more,
As the slow rust eats to the iron's core.

Dickens.

From "The Miller's Daughter"

LOOK thro' mine eyes with thine. True wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine;
My other dearer life in life,
Look thro' my very soul with thine!
Untouch'd with any shade of years,
May those kind eyes for ever dwell!
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their part
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness past again,
And left a want unknown before;
Although the loss had brought us pain,
That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss,
The woven arms, seem but to me
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
The comfort, I have found in thee.
But that God bless thee, dear—who wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind—
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find.

Tennyson.

The Rosary

ONE ask'd me where the roses grew.
I bade him not go seek,
But forthwith bade my Julia show
A bud in either cheek.

Herrick.

The Love-Letter

WARMED by her hand and shadowed by her hair
As close she leaned and poured her heart through thee,
Whereof the articulate throbs accompany
The smooth black stream that makes thy whiteness fair,—
Sweet fluttering sheet, even of her breath aware,—
Oh, let thy silent song disclose to me
That soul wherewith her lip and eyes agree
Like married music in Love's answering air.

Fain had I watched her when, at some fond thought
Her bosom to the writing closelier press'd,
And her breast's secrets peered into her breast;

When, through eyes raised an instant, her soul sought
My soul, and from the sudden confluence caught
The words that made her love the loveliest.
Rossetti.

Farewell

THE water lingers where the leaves
Of lilies white are lying,
The daylight there, on summer eves,
With dim regret is dying.

Only the shadows noiselessly
Now brood the white leaves over,
So, when mine eyes must turn from thee
Each sad thought is thy lover.
Bourdillon.

Sonnet from the Portuguese

YET love, mere love, is beautiful indeed,
And worthy of acceptation. Fire is bright,
Let temple burn, or flax! An equal light
Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or weed.
And love is fire: and when I say at need
I *love thee* . . mark! . . *I love thee*, . . in thy sight
I stand transfigured, glorified aright,
With conscience of the new rays that proceed
Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures
Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
And what I *feel*, across the inferior features
Of what *I am*, doth flash itself, and show
How that great work of Love enhances Nature's.

Mrs. Browning.

Sonnet from the Portuguese

HOW do I love thee? Let me count the ways,
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise;
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith;
I love thee with a love I seem to lose
With my lost saints—I love thee with the breath
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Mrs. Browning.

She Was a Phantom of Delight

She was a phantom of delight,
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like Twilight's too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too.
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;

My-Love-For-Thee-Shall-Endless-Be

A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eyes serene
The very pulse of the machine,
A being breathing thoughtful breath
A traveler between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright,
With something of an angel light.

Wordsworth.

The Day-Dream

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old:
Across the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess followed him.

"I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss!"
"Oh! wake forever, love," she hears,
"O love! 'twas such as this and this."
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, streamed through many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

My-Love-Is-True-To-None-But-You

"O eyes long laid in happy sleep!"
"O happy sleep, that lightly fled!"
"O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!"
"O love, thy kiss would wake the dead!"
And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapor buoyed the crescent bark,
And, rapt through many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark.

"A hundred summers! can it be?
And wither goest thou, tell me where?"
"O seek my father's court with me,
For there are greater wonders there!"
And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Through all the world she
followed him.

Tennyson.

Dost Thou Remember

DOST thou remember that place so lonely,
A place for lovers, and lovers only,
Where first I told thee all my secret sighs?
When as the moonbeam, that trembled o'er thee,
Illumed thy blushes, I knelt before thee,
And read my hope's sweet triumph in those eyes?
Then, then, while closely heart was drawn to heart,
Love bound us — never, never more to part!
And when I call'd thee by names the dearest
That love could fancy, the fondest, nearest —
"My life, my only life!" among the rest;
In those sweet accents that still inthral me,
Thou saidst, "Ah! wherefore thy life thus call me?
Thy soul, thy soul's the name that I love best;
For life soon passes — but how bless'd to be
That soul which never, never parts from thee!"

Moore.

My-Love-To-Thee-Like-This-Shall-Be

Britain's Ida

LOVE is life's end; an end but never ending;
All joys, all sweets, all happiness awarding;
Love is life's wealth (ne'er spent but ever spending),
Love's life's reward, rewarded in rewarding:
Then from thy wretched heart fond care remove
Ah! shouldst thou live but once love's sweets to prove,
Thou wilt not love to live, unless thou live to love.

Spenser.

Somewhere or Other

SOMEWHERE or other there must surely be
The face not seen, the voice not heard,
The heart not yet — never yet — oh me!
Made answer to my word.

Rossetti.

To Love

WHY should I blush to own I love?
'T is love that rules the realms above.
Why should I blush to say to all
That virtue holds my heart in thrall?

Why should I seek the thickest shade,
Lest Love's dear secret be betrayed?
Why the stern brow deceitful move,
When I am languishing with love?

Is it weakness thus to dwell
On passion that I dare not tell?
Such weakness I would ever prove.
'T is painful, though 't is sweet, to love.

White.

NOT to be with you, not to see your face,
Alas for me then, my good days are done.

Tennyson.

Love

LOVE is not to be reasoned down or lost
In high ambition, and a thirst of greatness.
'Tis second life, it grows into the soul,
Warms every vein, and beats in every pulse.

Addison.

Love's Power

A WEAK white girl
Held all his heartstrings in her small white hand;
His youth, and power, and majesty were hers,
And not his own.

Ingelow.

To a Fair Maiden

FAIR maiden! when I look at thee
I wish I could be young and free;
But both at once, ah! who could be?

Landor.

No-Gift-Can-Show-The-Love-I-Ow

One Way of Love

ALL June I bound the rose in sheaves.
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves,
And strew them where Pauline may pass.
She will not turn aside? Alas!
Let them lie. Suppose they die?
The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
These stubborn fingers to the lute!
To-day I venture all I know.
She will not hear my music? So!
Break the string—fold music's wing.
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion.—Heaven or hell?

She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
Lose who may—I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they.
Browning.

Destiny

SOMEWHERE there waiteth in this world of ours
For one lone soul another lonely soul,
Each choosing each through all the weary hours
And meeting strangely at one sudden goal.
Then blend they, like green leaves with golden flowers,
Into one beautiful and perfect whole;
And life's long night is ended, and the way
Lies open onward to eternal day.
Arnold.

Hinc Illæ Lacrimæ

MY Lais with her pretty wiles,
Subdues me to her will;
However sweet may be her smiles,
Her tears are sweeter still.

The other day, she wept, and when
She laid her head at this
Close up against my shoulder, then
I gave the girl a kiss.

And as a trickling streamlet drips
Down from a fountainside,
Her tears fell on our meeting lips: —
I asked her why she cried.

She said: "You wonder at my tears;
What should I do but grieve?
You fill me with too many fears;
I know that men deceive."

Sedgwick.

From "Evangeline"

TALK not of wasted affection, affection never
was wasted.
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters,
returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them
full of refreshment.

Longfellow.

The Maid I Love

THE maid I love ne'er thought of me
Amid the scenes of gaiety;
But when her heart or mine sank low,
Ah then it was no longer so.
From the slant palm she rais'd her head,
And kist the cheek whence youth had fled.
Angels! some future day for this,
Give her as sweet and pure a kiss.

Landor.

A Complaint

THERE is a change,—and I am poor;
Your love hath been, nor long ago,
A fountain at my fond heart's door,
Whose only business was to flow;
And flow it did, not taking heed
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!
Blest was I then all bliss above!
Now, for that consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
What have I? Shall I dare to tell?
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love; it may be deep,—
I trust it is,—and never dry.
What matter? If the waters sleep

In silence and obscurity.
Such change, and at the very door
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.
Wordsworth.

From "The Princess"

MY bride, my wife, my life. O we will walk this world,
Yoked in all exercise of noble end
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows. Indeed I love thee: come
Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine are one:
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself;
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.
Tennyson.

LOVE strikes one hour—LOVE! those *never* loved,
Who dream that they loved ONCE.
Mrs. Browning.

Of-Rapturous-Joye-I-Am-The-Toy

The Lost Love

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove;
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
— Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and Oh!
The difference to me!

Wordsworth.

TOO full of love my soul is to find place
For fear or anger.

Arnold.

Love's Language

THEIR little language the children
Have, on the knee as they sit;
And only those who love them
Can find the key to it.

The words thereof and the grammar
Perplex the logician's art;
But the heart goes straight with the meaning,
And the meaning is clear to the heart.

So thou, my Love, hast a language
That in little says all to me;—
But the world cannot guess the sweetness
Which is hidden with love and thee.

Palgrave.

NOTHING is better, I well know,
Than love.

Swinburne.

If We Had Met

IF we had met when leaves were green,
And fate to us less hard had proved,
And naught had been of what has been,
We might have loved as none have loved.

If we had met as girl and boy,
The world of pleasure at our feet,
Our joy had been a perfect joy,
We might have met, but did not meet.

Nor less in youth's full passionate day,
A woman you and I a man,
We might have loved and found a way
No laws could check, no vows could ban.

Too late! Too sad! A year ago,
Even then perhaps, in spite of fate,

It might have been, but, ah, not now,
I dare not love you, 'tis too late.

Blunt.

She is Not Fair

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be;
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me.
O then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

Coleridge.

Imitated from Catullus

TO ELLEN

OH! might I kiss those eyes of fire,
A million scarce would quench desire:
Still would I steep my lips in bliss,
And dwell an age on every kiss:
Nor then my soul should sated be;
Still would I kiss and cling to thee:
Nought should my kiss from thine dissever;
Still would we kiss, and kiss forever;
E'en though the numbers did exceed
The yellow harvest's countless seed.
To part would be a vain endeavor:
Could I desist?— ah! never — never

Byron.

The Exchange

WE pledged our hearts, my love and I,
I in my arms the maiden clasping;
I could not tell the reason why,
But, oh! I trembled like an aspen.

Her father's love she bade me gain;
I went, and shook like any reed!
I strove to act the man—in vain!
We had exchanged our hearts indeed.

Coleridge.

Writing

WHEN words we want, Love teacheth to indite;
And what we blush to speak, she bids us write.

Herrick.

I Waited Till the Twilight

I WAITED till the twilight,
And yet he did not come;
I strayed along the brookside,
And slowly wandered home;
When who should come behind me,
But him I would have chid;
He said he came to find me—
Do you really think he did?

He said since last we parted,
He'd thought of nought so sweet,
As of this very moment,—
The moment we should meet.
He showed me where, half-shaded,
A cottage home lay hid,
He said for me he'd made it—
Do you really think he did?

He said when first he saw me,
  Life seemed at once divine,
Each night he dreamed of angels,
  And every face was mine;
Sometimes a voice in sleeping
  Would all his hopes forbid;
And then he 'd waken weeping—
  Do you really think he did?

Swain.

On Gilly-Flowers Begotten

WHAT was 't that fell but now
  From that warm kiss of ours?
Look, look! by love I vow
  They were two gilly-flowers.
Let 's kiss and kiss again,
  For if so be our closes
Make gilly-flowers, then
  I'm sure they 'll fashion roses.

Herrick.

The Brookside

I WANDER'D by the brook-side,
I wander'd by the mill,—
I could not hear the brook flow,
The noisy wheel was still;
There was no burr of grasshopper,
Nor chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beneath the elm-tree,
I watch'd the long, long shade,
And as it grew still longer,
I did not feel afraid;
For I listen'd for a footfall,
I listen'd for a word,—
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

He came not, — no, he came not,—
The night came on alone,—
The little stars sat, one by one,
Each on his golden throne;
The evening air pass'd by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirr'd—
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When something stood behind,—
A hand was on my shoulder,
I knew its touch was kind:
It drew me nearer — nearer,—
We did not speak one word,
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard.

Houghton.

The-Sight-Of-Thee-Is-Joy-To-Me

Sonnet from the Portuguese

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write,
And ever since it grew more clean and white,
Slow to world greetings—quick with its "Oh, list,"
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here plainer to my sight,
Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed,
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third, upon my lips, was folded down
In perfect, purple state! since when, indeed,
I have been proud and said, "My Love, my own."

Mrs. Browning.

This-And-I-Until-I-Die

Sonnet from the Portuguese

IF thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
"I love her for her smile . . her look . . . her way
Of speaking gently, . . . for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day"—
For these things in themselves, Beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love so
wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,
Since one might well forget to weep who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby.
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayest love on through love's eternity.

Mrs. Browning.

This-Ring-Doth-Binde-Body-And-Minde

Love Me Little, Love Me Long

LOVE me little, love me long!
Is the burden of my song;
Love that is too hot and strong
Burneth soon to waste.
Still I would not have thee cold,
Not too backward, nor too bold;
Love that lasteth till 'tis old
Fadeth not in haste.
Love me little, love me long!
Is the burden of my song.

If thou lovest me too much
'T will not prove as true a touch;
Love me little more than such,—
For I fear the end.
I'm with little well content,
And a little from thee sent
Is enough with true intent
To be steadfast, friend.

This-Take-For-My-Sake

Say thou lovest me, while thou live
I to thee my love will give,
Never dreaming to deceive
While that life endures;
Nay, and after death in sooth,
I to thee will keep my truth,
As now when in my May of youth;
This my love assures.

Constant love is moderate ever,
And it will through life persever;
Give me that with true endeavour,—
I will it restore.
A suit of durance let it be,
For all weathers,—that for me,—
For the land or for the sea,
Lasting ever more.

Winter's cold or summer's heat,
Autumn's tempests on it beat;
It can never know defeat,
Never can rebel.

Thy-Consent-Is-My-Content

Such the love that I would gain,
Such the love, I tell thee plain,
Thou must give, or woo in vain
So to thee—Farewell.

Anonymous.

From "Locksley Hall"

IN the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;
In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Tennyson.

To Love

WHERE is my heart, perfidious boy?
Give it, ah give it back again!
I ask no more for hours of joy,
Lift but thy arm, and burst my chain.

"Fond man the heart we rashly gave
She prizes not but won't restore;
She passes on from slave to slave—
Go, go; thy heart is thine no more."

Landor.

From "The Last Minstrel"

LOVE rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above,
For love is heaven and heaven is love.

Scott.

You Ask Me for a Pledge, Love

YOU ask me for a pledge, love, but gaze upon
my cheek,
And let its hue, when thou art near, my heart's de-
votion speak;
Look on my dim and tearful eye, my pale and rigid
brow,
List to my deep, unbidden sigh,—what need of
pledge or vow!

You ask me for a pledge, love, some token of my
troth;
Take then this flower, an emblem meet of woman's
blighted youth;
The perfume of its withered leaves, triumphant
o'er decay,
May whisper of my changeless love when I have
passed away!

What, yet another pledge, love; then mark me
while I vow,
By all this heart hath borne for thee, by all it
suffers now;
In grief or gladness, hope, despair, in bliss or
misery,
I'll be what I have ever been—to thee, to only
thee!

Watts.

From Coriolanus.

OH, a kiss
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear, and my true lip
Hath virgined it e'r since.

Shakespeare.

In the Year that 's Come and Gone

IN the year that 's come and gone, Love, his flying feather,
Stooping slowly, gave us heart, and bade us walk together.
In the year that 's coming on, though many a troth be broken,
We at least will not forget aught that Love hath spoken.

In the years that 's come and gone, dear, we wove a tether
All of gracious words and thougnts, binding two together.
In the year that 's coming on, with its wealth of roses,
We shall weave it stronger yet, ere the circle closes.

Tis-Thy-Desert-Hath-Woone-My-Heart

In the year that's come and gone, in the golden
weather,
Sweet, my sweet, we swore to keep the watch of
life together.
In the year that's coming on, rich in joy and sorrow,
We shall light our lamp, and wait life's mysterious
morrow.

Henley.

From "The Silent Lover"

PASSIONS are likened best to floods and
streams;
The shallows murmur, but the deeps are dumb;
So, when affections yield discourse, it seems
The bottom is but shallow whence they come.
They that are rich in words, in words discover
That they are poor in that which makes a lover.

Raleigh.

Tis-True-As-Old-Hot-Love-Soon-Cold

Fatality

I HAVE seen her, with her golden hair,
And her exquisite primrose face,
And the violet in her eyes;
And my heart received its own despair—
The thrall of a hopeless grace,
And the knowledge of how youth dies.

Live hair afloat with snakes of gold,
And a throat as white as snow,
And a stately figure and foot,
And that faint, pink smile, so sweet and cold,
Like a wood-anemone cloud below
The shade of an ilex root.

And her delicate, milk-white hand in mine,
And her pensive voice in my ear,
And her eyes downcast as we speak.

I am filled with a rapture vague and fine,
For there has fallen a sparkling tear
Over her soft pale cheek.

And I know that all is hopeless now,
And that which might have been,
Had she only waited a year or two,
Is turned to a wild regret, I know,
Which will haunt us both, whatever the scene,
And whatever the path we go.

Meanwhile, for one moment, hand in hand,
We gaze on each other's eyes,
And the red moon rises above us.
We linger in love with the lovely land—
Italy, with its yearning skies,
And its wild, white stars above us.

Meredith.

To-Me-Till-Death-As-Dear-As-Breath

Old Age

TIME is pressing on us now,
Sowing wrinkles on each brow;
If we must grow old in sooth,
Keep we all we can of youth;
But each step we take seems bringing
Flowers in wild profusion springing,
More than we can hope to hold,
Friends, this is not growing old.

Sparkling juice and merry song
Gayly chase the hours along;
Guests around our table may
Whisper that our locks are gray,
What care we if rosy wine
Tells us of a youth divine,
If our hearts are never cold;
Friends, this is not growing old.

To-Thee-My-Love-I'll-Constant-Prove

Does a laughing, roguish eye,
Snare us, as in days gone by,
Hinting, in a saucy fashion,
Age is scarcely meant for passion —
Less we love the less we spend,
Of a mistress make a friend,
Careless if she smile or scold;
Friends, this is not growing old.

If in spite of merry cheer
Age should try to catch us here,
Let us boldly, bravely meet him,
All together we must greet him;
So by our fireside, whenever
Old age comes, we'll all together
Jeer him back into the cold;
Friends, this is not growing old.

Béranger.

Sweethearts Always

TWO lovers by a moss-grown spring,
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrushes sing.
O budding time!
O love's best prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept;
The bells made happy carollings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
While petals on the pathway slept.
O pure-eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent;
Two hands above the head were locked;
These pressed each other while they rocked,
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

When-Love-Is-Dead-My-Joys-Are-Fled

Two parents by the evening fire;
  The red light fell about their knees
  On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spire.
    O patient life!
    O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
  The red light shone about their knees;
  But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
    O voyage fast
    O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor,
  And made the space between them wide;
  They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said, "Once more!"
    O memories!
    O past that is!

Eliot.

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